



Brownfields 2005 Grant Fact Sheet

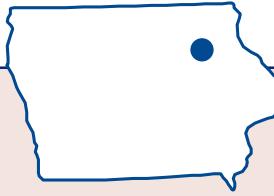
Oelwein, IA

EPA Brownfields Program

EPA's Brownfields Program empowers states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic development to work together to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield site is real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. On January 11, 2002, President George W. Bush signed into law the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act. Under the Brownfields Law, EPA provides financial assistance to eligible applicants through four competitive grant programs: assessment grants, revolving loan fund grants, cleanup grants, and job training grants. Additionally, funding support is provided to state and tribal response programs through a separate mechanism.

Community Description

The City of Oelwein was selected to receive two brownfields assessment grants. Oelwein (population 6,692) was founded in 1872 with the arrival of the railroad. The railroad was the major employer of Oelwein residents until the 1980s, when most of the railroad business moved out of town, and hundreds of jobs were lost. The city now is characterized by a median household income a little more than half the state average, and a 12 percent poverty rate. Adding to the city's difficulties are the numerous brownfields that surround nearly half of Oelwein's commercial property tax base. Longstanding neighborhoods also have been adversely impacted by unsightly and frequently dusty conditions created by these potentially environmentally



Assessment Grants

\$200,000 for hazardous substances

\$200,000 for petroleum

EPA has selected the City of Oelwein for two brownfields assessment grants. Grant funds will be used to perform Phase I and II site assessments, and conduct cleanup planning for properties contaminated with hazardous substances and petroleum in the Redevelopment Project Area surrounding the downtown district. Funds will also be used for conducting community outreach activities, and identifying and monitoring risks to sensitive populations.

Contacts

For further information, including specific grant contacts, additional grant information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at: www.epa.gov/brownfields.

EPA Region 7 Brownfields Team

913-551-7646

<http://www.epa.gov/Region7/citizens/brownfields/index.htm>

Grant Recipient: City of Oelwein, IA
319-283-5440

The cooperative agreement for this grant has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.

compromised sites. Residents of these areas have been burdened by a higher proportion of environmental and safety hazards than those in other parts of the community. A broad range of industrial sites are contaminated with heavy metals, volatile organic compounds, PCBs, and pesticides. The city plans to develop an approach for long-term maintenance and care of these properties, which will benefit residents by reducing the risk of exposure to environmental contaminants in air, water, and soil, and improve areas that have been a deterrent to new investment and job creation.